

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2017

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HOUSE BILL 325  
Committee Substitute Favorable 4/4/17  
Committee Substitute #2 Favorable 4/21/17  
Senate Judiciary Committee Substitute Adopted 6/21/17  
Senate Judiciary Committee Substitute Adopted 6/13/18  
Sixth Edition Engrossed 6/13/18

Short Title: Amend Arson Law.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 14, 2017

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO MODIFY AND STRENGTHEN THE CRIMINAL LAWS REGARDING  
3 ARSON.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 SECTION 1. Article 15 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes is amended by adding  
6 a new section to read:

7 "**§ 14-67.2. Burning caused during commission of another felony.**

8 (a) If any person, during the commission of a felony, knowingly damages any dwelling,  
9 structure, building, or conveyance referenced in this Article by means of fire or explosive that  
10 results in damages valued at ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or more, the person shall be punished  
11 as a Class D felon unless the person's conduct is covered under some other provision of law  
12 providing greater punishment.

13 (b) If any person, during the commission of a felony, knowingly causes, aids, abets,  
14 advises, encourages, hires, counsels, or procures another person to damage any dwelling,  
15 structure, building, or conveyance referenced in this Article by means of fire or explosive that  
16 results in damages valued at ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or more, the person shall be punished  
17 as a Class D felon unless the person's conduct is covered under some other provision of law  
18 providing greater punishment."

19 SECTION 2. G.S. 14-69.3 reads as rewritten:

20 "**§ 14-69.3. Arson or other unlawful burning that results in serious bodily injury to a**  
21 **firefighter or firefighter, law enforcement officer, fire investigator, or emergency**  
22 **medical technician.**

23 (a) The following definitions apply in this section:

24 (1) Emergency medical technician. – The term includes an emergency medical  
25 technician, an emergency medical technician-intermediate, and an emergency  
26 medical technician-paramedic, as those terms are defined in G.S. 131E-155.

27 (2) Fire investigator. – The term includes any person who, individually or as part  
28 of an investigative team, has the responsibility and authority to determine the  
29 origin, cause, or development of a fire or explosion.

30 (b) A person is guilty of a Class E felony if the person commits a felony under Article 15  
31 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes and a ~~firefighter~~ firefighter, law enforcement officer, fire  
32 investigator, or emergency medical technician suffers serious bodily injury while discharging or



1 attempting to discharge ~~the firefighter's or emergency medical technician's official~~ duties on the  
2 property, or proximate to the property, that is the subject of the ~~firefighter's~~ firefighter's, law  
3 enforcement officer's, fire investigator's, or emergency medical technician's discharge or attempt  
4 to discharge his or her respective duties. ~~As used in this section, the term "emergency medical~~  
5 ~~technician" includes an emergency medical technician, an emergency medical~~  
6 ~~technician-intermediate, and an emergency medical technician-paramedic, as those terms are~~  
7 ~~defined in G.S. 131E-155."~~

8 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 58-79-1 reads as rewritten:

9 **"§ 58-79-1. Fires investigated; reports; records.**

10 The Director of the State Bureau of Investigation, through the State Bureau of Investigation,  
11 the Office of the State Fire Marshal, and the chief of the fire department, or chief of police where  
12 there is no chief of the fire department, in municipalities and towns, and the county fire marshal  
13 and the sheriff of the county and the chief of the rural fire department where such fire occurs  
14 outside of a municipality, are hereby authorized to investigate the cause, origin, and  
15 circumstances of every fire occurring in such municipalities or counties in which property has  
16 been destroyed or damaged, and shall specially make investigation whether the fire was the result  
17 of carelessness or design. A preliminary investigation shall be made by the chief of fire  
18 department or chief of police, where there is no chief of fire department in municipalities, and by  
19 the county fire marshal and the sheriff of the county or the chief of the rural fire department  
20 where such fire occurs outside of a municipality, and must be begun within three days, exclusive  
21 of Sunday, of the occurrence of the fire, and the Director of the State Bureau of Investigation,  
22 through the State Bureau of Investigation, shall have the right to supervise and direct the  
23 investigation when he deems it expedient or necessary.

24 The officer making the investigation of fires shall forthwith notify the Director of the State  
25 Bureau of Investigation, and must within one week of the occurrence of the fire furnish to the  
26 Director of the State Bureau of Investigation a written statement of all facts relating to the cause  
27 and origin of the fire, the kind, value and ownership of the property destroyed, and such other  
28 information as is called for by the forms provided by the Director of the State Bureau of  
29 Investigation. Departments capable of submitting the required information by the utilization of  
30 computers and related equipment, by means of an approved format of standard punch cards,  
31 magnetic tapes or an approved telecommunications system, may do so in lieu of the submission  
32 of the written statement as provided for in this section. The Director of the State Bureau of  
33 Investigation shall keep in his office a record of all reports submitted pursuant to this section.  
34 These reports shall at all times be open to public inspection."

35 **SECTION 4.** Sections 1 and 2 of this act become effective December 1, 2018, and  
36 apply to offenses committed on or after that date. The remainder of this act is effective when it  
37 becomes law.